

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



AUG 03 2011

Reply to Attn of:

Office of the Chief Information Officer

TO: Distribution

FROM: Chief Information Officer
Assistant Administrator for Strategic Infrastructure

SUBJECT: Digital Media Sanitization and Disposal Interim Actions

On December 7, 2010, the NASA Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued a report highlighting concerns regarding the sanitization of computer hard drives being excessed through NASA Centers' disposal operations (see *Preparing for the Space Shuttle Program's Retirement: A Review of NASA's Disposition of Information Technology Equipment, Report Number IG-11-009, Assignment Number A-09-018-01*: <http://oig.nas.gov/audits/reports/FY11/IG-11-009.pdf>).

To mitigate the immediate risks associated with weaknesses in NASA's media sanitization and disposition processes, on January 7, 2011, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the Office of Strategic Infrastructure (OSI) issued a policy memorandum directing all Center disposal operations to cease until notification from Headquarters Logistics Management Division. (The policy was subsequently extended on February 14, 2011.) On April 2, 2011 disposal operations resumed at all Centers under current ITS-HBK-0035 titled, "Digital Media Sanitization."

To address the OIG findings and recommendations, an interdisciplinary Integrated Process Improvement Tiger Team (IPITT) for the Disposal and Sanitization of Digital Media (DSDM) was formed.

On July 15, 2011, the IPITT for DSDM presented its findings to senior management at NASA Headquarters. Following this briefing, NASA management concluded that given the volume of digital media throughout the Agency, the most cost-effective end-of-life process for digital media containing Space Shuttle information may be the destruction of the media. As a result, OCIO and OSI interim policy is to direct that all digital media associated with the Space Shuttle Program to be excessed, shall be removed and destroyed with the following exceptions:

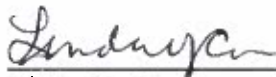
1. Equipment that will be transferred for use by another NASA organization (whereby clearing the media of all data is considered the appropriate sanitization method); and
2. Special cases that justify the non-destruction of hard drives should proceed in a manner that preserves the security of NASA data.¹

¹ For example, a retired Space Shuttle system is to be transferred to a U.S. university. In order for the system to be used by the university, the system must be functional and include the operating system and hard drives. Rather than removing and destroying the hard drives, NASA should wipe the drives and reinstall the operating system.

For the exceptions, and all other programs, ITS-HBK-0035 titled, "Digital Media Sanitization" contains current NASA-approved destruction methods (Tables 9-1 through 9-10). This policy addresses multiple types of digital media and associated destruction mechanism along with associated expected outcomes. No sampling verification of the destroyed digital media is required as long as all digital media are physically destroyed pursuant to the standards of ITS-HBK-0035.

The disposition of computers as "excess" (via Center Property Disposal Officer, Plant Clearance Officer, or other) should be done in accordance with the contract terms and conditions, and Center policy, as applicable. Documentation reflecting the removal of the hard drive and its destruction is required before final disposition of the hardware can be completed.

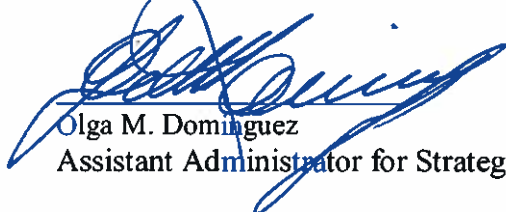
Any question regarding destruction mechanisms for digital media not addressed in ITS-HBK-0035 should be addressed to local Center Chief Information Security Officers and the Property Disposal Officers.



Linda Y. Cureton
Chief Information Officer

7/29/11

Date



Olga M. Dominguez
Assistant Administrator for Strategic Infrastructure

8/1/11

Date

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